



# NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

## LABOR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

The Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA), consisting of Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, and Jefferson counties, saw a monthly unemployment rate decrease of one-tenth of a percentage point, currently at 3.2 percent. The unemployment rate was down six-tenths of a percentage point from June 2000. The Bonneville LMA holds the lowest unemployment rate compared to the state's six other LMA's and two Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). The LMA's unemployment rate in June was 1.6 percentage points lower than the state's rate of 4.8 percent, and 1.3 percentage points lower than the national rate of 4.5 percent.

At 2.9 percent in June, Bonneville County held the lowest unemployment rate in the Bonneville LMA, followed by Jefferson, Butte, and Bingham counties at 3.3, 3.8, and 3.9 percent, respectively. The unemployment rate for Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, decreased one-tenth of a percentage point over the month to 3.1 percent, and decreased three-tenths of a percentage point from June 2000.

The *Civilian Labor Force* showed an increase of 770 people over the month, with the economy holding steady. Seasonal demands for construction workers, garden and building supply workers, and recreation workers are still apparent, along with a need for call center workers. The year-over-year growth in the *Civilian Labor Force* was 3,920 people.

*Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 1,400 over the month, for a total of 65,160 jobs in the LMA. *Goods-Producing Industries* increased by 710 jobs over the month, with *Construction* adding almost 580 of those jobs. *Manufacturing* experienced an increase of 130 jobs (mostly in *Nondurable Goods*), its largest monthly increase in 2001. *Service-Producing Industries* also increased, adding 690 jobs. *Services* increased by 210 jobs. More than 150 of those jobs were in *Hotels & Other Lodging* and *Amusement & Recreation Ser-*

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, & Jefferson counties

	June 2001*	May 2001	June 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	83,470	82,700	79,550	0.9	4.9
Unemployment	2,710	2,770	3,040	-2.2	-10.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.2	3.3	3.8		
Total Employment	80,760	79,930	76,520	1.0	5.5
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	84,700	82,870	80,680	2.2	5.0
Unemployment	2,390	2,300	2,650	3.9	-9.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.8	2.8	3.3		
Total Employment	82,310	80,570	78,030	2.2	5.5
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	65,160	63,760	63,630	2.2	2.4
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	10,170	9,460	9,830	7.5	3.5
Mining & Construction	4,910	4,330	4,460	13.4	10.1
Manufacturing	5,260	5,130	5,370	2.5	-2.0
Food Processing	2,680	2,640	2,880	1.5	-6.9
Ind. & Com. Mach. & Computer Equip.	460	440	560	4.5	-17.9
All Other Manufacturing	2,120	2,050	1,930	3.4	9.8
<b>Service-Producing Industries</b>	54,990	54,300	53,800	1.3	2.2
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,340	2,310	2,350	1.3	-0.4
Wholesale Trade	6,280	6,200	6,360	1.3	-1.3
Retail Trade	11,490	11,410	11,610	0.7	-1.0
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,950	1,920	1,870	1.6	4.3
Services	21,810	21,600	21,120	1.0	3.3
Government Administration	5,790	5,460	5,100	6.0	13.5
Government Education	5,330	5,400	5,390	-1.3	-1.1
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

*vices. Engineering & Management* saw a decrease of 20 jobs for the month, and more announced decreases will be noticeable in the near future since the monthly data is generated from the middle of the month's activities and does not capture the complete month. *Government Administration* increased by 330 jobs within *Local Government* and *Federal Government*. The only major government industry decrease was seen in *Government Education*, with a decrease of 70 jobs as the spring school session came to an end.

A year-over-year comparison shows that *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 1,530 jobs. *Goods-Producing Industries* increased by 340, with *Construction* and *All Other Manufacturing* being the only contributors. *Service-Producing Industries* showed an overall increase of 1,190 jobs, with *Services* and *Government Administration* each increasing 690 jobs. All other major industries showed decreases with the exception of *Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate* that increased by 80 jobs.

## SPECIAL TOPIC:

### Dancing in the Streets

Rexburg (Madison County) again hosted the International Folk Dance Festival for the event's 16<sup>th</sup> year. Dancers from all over the world came to

be a part of this occasion and to share their culture, while experiencing America's culture. The teams change each year, with this year's representatives from eight countries: Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Peru, Romania, South Korea, and an American Indian team from Fort Hall representing the United States. For the past three years, the festival has been listed as one of the top 100 events in North America by the American Bus Association, and rightly so. The festival lasted for eight days and was full of free events as well as paid performances. The festival is now estimated to attract 60,000 people and generates nearly \$3 million in revenue for the economy.

The festival kicked off with an International Street Dance on Main Street Friday night followed by the International Parade Saturday morning, a change from Monday in past years, to accommodate more people and vendors. The International Street Festival covered the majority of the day, consisting of vendor booths from each participating country and local businesses. Music, dancing, and entertainment occupied the streets, with two intersections set aside for staging areas for the dance teams. Photographs were taken with the teams. The evening was reserved for an Opening Ceremony at Ricks College Viking Stadium. The Opening Ceremony was similar to that of the Olympic Games as each country's team carried its respective flag and wore traditional clothing as they entered the field while their respective national anthem played. Teams from each country exchanged gifts with the other teams, and then each team performed a native dance. Fireworks, set to each country's traditional music, ended the spectacular display. The Opening Ceremony, street activities, and Youth Culture Days were free of charge. Youth Culture Days lasted 3 days, and children learned the dances and culture of the various teams.

Paid performances took place the last three days of the festival at the Hart Auditorium of Ricks College, with pre-shows two of the days and a closing ceremony the last night. There was a community picnic and band concert free to the public at Smiths Park in Rexburg the final day prior to the Closing Ceremony. Since the Festival ended August 4, make sure you watch for the Festival next July. The Festival requires a year of preparation and hundreds of behind-the-scenes volunteers.

## **AREA DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Bonneville County**

- Ttest, a biotech company that announced its plans to build a manufacturing facility in Rexburg earlier this year, currently is operating out of Idaho Falls as a temporary site until the facility can be built in Rexburg. The company manufactures saliva-based test strips for blood alcohol levels. It currently is operating in the leased Technology Center, has six employees, and is making sure the business can operate in the area from a sales, distribution, and financing perspective. The company states it is more concerned with building a company than a building for now, but eventually plans to build a facility in Rexburg, though later than

proposed. Being in Idaho Falls will give the company the opportunity to start building their workforce and securing equipment, while having a large enough lab to accommodate the company.

- The Idaho Falls Regional airport is starting to break ground on the second phase of the airport's major renovation project. The middle portion of the airport will be closed and travelers will be routed through special doors on the east and west wings of the building during this phase. The airport's businesses and flights will not be affected during the construction. Total renovation is estimated at \$6.2 million and will add 12,000 square feet to the building. The complete renovation is expected to be finished by September 2002. This second phase should be completed by May 2002, and will focus on the remodel of the building's two wings.
- Tele-Servicing Innovations (TSI) is moving its Idaho Falls operation to a space on Woodruff Avenue next door to AMX International. The company now employs 130 workers in Idaho Falls. At 19,000 square feet, the new building will allow for expanded training space. The company provides over-the-phone marketing for large companies like HBO and DirecTV. TSI aggressively is setting up operations throughout the state of Idaho, and has found rural communities to be a big asset.

### **Madison County**

- Western Wats, the largest privately owned data collection company in the nation, recently opened a new business-to-business market research division of its survey call center at 8 South First East in Rexburg. The company gathers information through the Internet and by telephone to learn what services businesses want, and offers market research, public opinion polling, customized programming, and data processing. Ricks College's decision to become a four-year university worked well into Western Wats' expansion plan. The company cited a highly qualified student population as a great asset. Western Wats employs 165 workers, but the new division has already added 40 workers and plans to add up to 100 by next summer.
- Tri-County Equipment closed its doors after 31 years of business. The Rexburg dealership pointed to faltering farms and profit-driven manufacturers as the main reasons. The dealership carried large farming equipment and serviced the local communities through three generations of the Burt family. Tri-County employed 16 full-time workers.

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